

Claim ~~63~~, line 2, change "1" to read --72--.

Claim ~~72~~, line 1, change "1" to read --73--.

REMARKS

Claims 2-47, 49, 50, 52, 53 and 56-73 are presented for reconsideration.

In the Office Action, claims 1 and 72 were rejected under 35 USC 112, and on the combination of the admitted prior art and Finzel (GB 2 277 812) and claims 2-47, 49, 50, 52, 53 and 56-61 were withdrawn from consideration as being directed to the non-elected invention.

With regard to the Examiner's withdrawal of claims, such as independent claim 25 and dependent claims 28 and 31, it is noted that in the Office Action of November 29, 1999, which set forth the requirement for restriction and the election of species, these were grouped in Species A along with original claim 1 (see the first two lines of page 4 of that Office Action). Therefore, applicants' attorneys do not understand why a complete examination of the elected species was not given. It is noted that even if claim 1 were rejected along with claim 72, an examination of the above-mentioned claims 25, 28 and 31 should also have been given.

By this amendment, generic claim 1 has been represented as claim 73 and has been amended to overcome the rejections on prior art and the rejection under 35 USC 112; claims 4-14, 16, 18-22, 24, 29, 30, 34 and 63, which were dependent on claim 1, have now been amended to be dependent upon claim 72 and claims 2 and 3 have been amended to be dependent upon the newly-presented independent claim 73

It is respectfully submitted that claim 73, which is generic to the species, is patentable over the prior art, since Finzel (GB 2 277 812) does not teach or suggest each of the lead-in spigots being a pipe tightly fitted in the closure body, each of the optical cables being an optical waveguide in a cable or optical waveguide microcable having a pipe with the waveguides

loosely disposed therein, said cable being received in the lead-in units with the pipe of each spigot engaging the pipe of the optical waveguide disposed therein and having a sealing connection of the pipe of the spigot to the pipe of the cable for sealing off the pipe of each cable. It is noted that in the British Reference, the cable 7 is a flexible member that does not have a pipe. Therefore, there is no teaching or suggestion of a pipe of the cable being connected to the pipe, such as 25, of the spigot without relying on applicants' disclosure. For these reasons, it is respectfully submitted that claim 73 is clearly patentable over the prior art and is allowable.

Since claim 73 is generic to each of the Species A, B and C, it is submitted that an examination of claims 2-47, 49, 50, 56-68 and 72 should be given. It is also submitted that even if generic claim 73 is rejected, the elected species of independent claim 72 and dependent claims 4-14, 16-24, 29, 30, 32-34, 37 and 56-68 should be examined along with independent claim 25 and dependent claims 28 and 31, which are all directed to Species A. The British Reference does not teach the connection recited in claim 72 and, therefore, claims 4-14, 16-24, 29, 30, 32-34, 37 and 56-68 are allowable. It is also submitted that none of the references teach the structure recited in claim independent claim 25 and dependent claims 28 and 31 and, therefore, these claims are also allowable.

In view of the amendments and explanations contained hereinabove, it is respectfully submitted that this application is now in condition for immediate formal allowance and further reconsideration to that end is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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